Chr. Anstey

A

CHARGE

DELIVERED TO THE

CLERGY

OF THE

DIOCESE OF DURHAM,

BY

SHUTE, LORD BISHOP OF DURHAM.

Price One Shilling.

BRITISH MUSEUM

A

CHARGE

DELIVERED TO THE

CLERGY

OF THE

DIOCESE OF DURHAM,

AT THE

PRIMARY VISITATION

OF THAT

DIOCESE,

IN THE YEAR MDCCXCII.

BY

SHUTE, LORD BISHOP OF DURHAM.

BATH, PRINTED BY R. CRUTTWELL;

AND SOLD BY

THE BOOKSELLERS AT DURHAM

AND

NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE.

MDCC XCII.

BRITISH MUSEUM

TO

THE CLERGY

OF THE DIOCESE OF DURHAM,

THIS CHARGE,

PRINTED AT THEIR REQUEST,

IS INSCRIBED

BY

THEIR AFFECTIONATE FRIEND

AND BROTHER,

S. DUNELM.

REVEREND BRETHREN,

THE commencement of my paſtoral duties in this dioceſe I enter upon with a ſolicitude proportioned to their extent and importance; proportioned to my gratitude for his Majeſty's goodneſs, and to my anxiety not to diſcredit his unſolicited appointment.

The local circumſtances of my ſtation preſent to my wiſhes, (I will add, to my hopes) a variety of views, which include the intereſts of Religion, Morality, and Literature, in this Dioceſe; and which it would be the happineſs of my life to realize. I will, on my part, neglect no practicable means of advancing theſe valuable intereſts. To my Clergy, however, I muſt look for concurrence in the purſuit and execu-

tion of my wiſhes. On their unreſerved communication I muſt depend for much of that local information which is indiſpenſible to thoſe objects which I have in contemplation. I am aware that ſome of my public queries, as well as others which I may have propoſed to you in the courſe of this day, may ſeem minute, and of little apparent utility. I ſhould be ſorry not to remove ſo unfavourable an impreſſion, as your confidence in my intentions is neceſſary to the ſucceſs of my enquiries: and I beg to aſſure thoſe who may not at once enter into my views, that the minuteſt of my queries has not only its particular uſe, but its relative connection, with thoſe means which I am ſolicitous to employ for the general benefit of the dioceſe.

I. In ſelecting the ſubjects, which, on the preſent occaſion, I think it incumbent on me to recommend to your attention, there is one which is rendered prominent

prominent by the circumſtances of the day, and intereſting by the duty which we owe to the Chief Guardian of the public tranquillity; I mean the conſideration of his Majeſty's late gracious Proclamation; of the occurrences which gave riſe to it; and of the concern which you have in it, as Civil Magiſtrates, or Miniſters of Religion. As the happineſs and proſperity of a people depend on peace, and order, and obedience to the laws, it is the duty of every good citizen to co-operate with all lawful means which may beſt preſerve theſe ineſtimable bleſſings. In proportion to their value, all ſeditious writings and practices, which (by attempting to excite diſcontents among the people, and diſaffection to the ſubſiſting government) tend to endanger the good order and tranquillity of the community, ought to be diſcountenanced and reſiſted by every friend to his country.

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The bleſſings of peace and proſperity, which diſtinguiſh this country from the other nations of Europe, as much as the preſent day from former periods in its own hiſtory, it might have been expected, would have precluded all grounds of diſcontent. Yet this has been the moment choſen by our domeſtic and foreign enemies, for their attempts to raiſe ideal jealouſies in the minds of the people, to alienate their affections from the laws and conſtitution of their country, to depreciate and vilify the principles on which the Revolution was eſtabliſhed; and, in ſhort, to deprive all national experience of its authority, and all political knowledge of the ſtability of tried and approved principles. Sagacious and penetrating obſervers had watched the progreſs of the ſecret machinations employed for theſe purpoſes; they had ſounded the alarm againſt their probable effects; they had openly denounced theſe conſpiracies againſt the

public peace and welfare: but the people at large, conſcious of the general national proſperity, and the ſecurity of their rights, were inſenſible to theſe early admonitions; they were deaf to remonſtrances of which they felt not the neceſſity. Encouraged by the public acquieſcence, and the total revulſion of all political forms and principles in a neighbouring kingdom, our innovators openly avowed the moſt antimonarchical ſentiments, indulged in the moſt invidious admiration of ſyſtems ſubverſive of their own government, hazarded the moſt groundleſs projects, and built their theories, not on the baſis of experience, but the viſions of experiment.

Reform was the ſignal of innovation; reform, the impoſing habit, which violence and ſelf-intereſt often aſſume to effect their objects. It is much to be lamented, that good principles ſhould be

be capable of being perverted to pernicious purpoſes; becauſe the ſame act which repels a miſchievous meaſure, appears to reject the principle on which it was founded. Nothing can be more ſalutary in itſelf than the principle of reform. The happy Conſtitution which we poſſeſs has gradually grown to its preſent ſymmetry and beauty from a ſucceſſion of reforms. The glorious Revolution itſelf was but a reform; it gave the people no new rights; it innovated no political principles; but it preſented the people with a more regular digeſt of their rights than they before poſſeſſed; and ſecured them, by repoſing the adminiſtration and protection of them in a family, whoſe Princes have uniformly made the happineſs of the people inſeparable from their own.

But this ſalutary principle may be injudiciouſly applied; it may be partially directed, or unſeaſonably urged. It

It may be applied on merely ſpeculative and impracticable views; it may be applied for alteration, without the means of amendment; for the alteration of external forms, without any improvement in principle: it may be applied for the profeſſed purpoſe of ſerving the cauſe of the people, without the means of adding to the ſtock of liberty any one ſubſtantial right which they do not now poſſeſs; or any ſecurity for their rights which the preſent laws have not amply provided: it may be directed not to the good of the community, but to the intereſts of a ſmall part of it; it may be urged at unſeaſonable junctures, which a concurrence of foreign and domeſtic circumſtances may render highly unfit for hazarding great and eſſential changes in the conſtitutional order of things. The moſt virtuous intentions require the concurrent fitneſs of place and ſeaſon. They ought too to have a clear and definite object of reform.

form. A ſpirit of indefinite reform is pregnant with an infinity of miſchief; it expoſes the public mind to dangerous impreſſions; it promotes diſaffection to the ſubſiſting government; it tends to encourage tumult and diſorder; and often degenerates from the wiſh to reform and improve to a mere love of change and innovation.

Reſtleſs and ſeditious ſpirits watch theſe occaſions; they fall into the ranks of virtuous but inconſiderate reformers; they foment their zeal, accelerate their ardour, and impel them to extremes, which they neither foreſaw nor intended. It is thus that the pureſt patriotiſm is often duped into meaſures very inconſiſtent with its own views. Their ſecret inſtigators, while they aſſume the impoſing appearances of diſintereſted patriotiſm, betray their ſelfiſh purpoſes by that diſguſting vanity which ſets at defiance all conſtituted forms, all eſtabliſhed

bliſhed principles, all acknowledged authorities, all permanent rights and obligations. To repreſs theſe pernicious principles and wicked practices, little more was wanting than to recall the attention of the people to the ſubſtantial bleſſings which they enjoy under the eſtabliſhed conſtitution.

Particular offences againſt ſociety and civil government, while they are confined to the efforts of individuals, though they may deſerve the correction of civil puniſhment, will not warrant any extraordinary exertion of the executive authority. But when ſeditious offences, inſtead of being puniſhed, are publicly countenanced, defended, and held forth as ſubjects of public thanks and praiſe; when ſeditious principles begin to inſinuate themſelves into any degree of public approbation, and to be formed into habits of public ſentiment; then it concerns the chief magiſtrate, who

ſupports the executive authority, to provide againſt the conſequences which might follow from neglect. The exertion of the executive authority becomes neceſſary in proportion to the forbearance on one hand, and the conſequent audacity on the other: and the moſt effectual exertion of this authority is to direct the current of popular opinion againſt the writings which were intended to corrupt it. If this be done, though the writings themſelves ſhould not be totally ſuppreſſed, though they ſhould be ſo artfully worded as to eſcape the rigour of the law, yet they will exiſt, not as objects of public apprehenſion, but as monuments of impotent effrontery.

Accordingly, the firſt magiſtrate of the kingdom, and the chief guardian of the public peace, has exerted his duty and authority to rouſe the people from their ſupine tolerance of theſe projects

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of political empiriciſm, and to warn them againſt the gradual and imperceptible influence of ſuch unchecked licentiouſneſs. The experience of the meaſure has fully proved its wiſdom. This moſt ſeaſonable interpoſition of the executive authority has united the public voice and ſentiment in the moſt unequivocal declarations of attachment to the conſtitution of this country in its preſent form: it has drawn from the affections of the people a deciſive proof, that obſcure hand-bills, and ſeditious advertiſements, are not the organs of public ſentiment; it has cemented an union, which is an effectual refutation of the jealouſies and diſcontents attempted to be raiſed by wicked and ſeditious writings; and has formed a ſecurity againſt the alarms which the bold and licentious tone of theſe writings might have created.

For ſo timely and effectual an inſtance of his Majeſty's paternal ſolicitude for the peace and happineſs of his people, the thanks of all orders of men are juſtly due. But if any of his ſubjects are more eſpecially bound to teſtify their grateful acknowledgements on this occaſion, they are thoſe who unite in their capacities the duties of Chriſtian Citizen and Chriſtian Miniſter.

The beſt expreſſion, indeed, of our gratitude will be to promote, as far as in us lies, and in our reſpective ſtations, the important objects of his Majeſty's proclamation, by inculcating thoſe principles of peace and public order, on which our national happineſs depends; and by diſcountenancing thoſe impracticable theories, which tend to alienate the affections of our fellow-citizens from the laws and conſtitution of their country; by impreſſing on their minds that a conſtitution is not a liſt of im-

practicable data, or a capricious expreſſion of the public will, but a ſyſtem of conſtituted laws and eſtabliſhed rights; that ſtability is the protecting principle of all law and government; that rights, whether political or civil, without permanency, are no rights, but the ſport of accident, caprice, or violence.

II. As inſtability in our political laws would create diſaffection to the fundamental principle of civil union, which they embrace; ſo inſtability in our religious laws would tend to the diſhonour of the eſſential doctrines of religion, which they protect. Among other propoſed objects of innovation in our laws, there is one which cannot have eſcaped your obſervation, but which I recall to your attention, becauſe it more immediately concerns you as Miniſters of religion: I mean the propoſal made, in the laſt ſeſſion of Parliament, for repealing the ſtatutes which were enacted

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for protecting the fundamental doctrines of Chriſtianity from blaſphemy and corruption. As the ſubject, in all views, is of great national importance, I ſhall ſubmit to you ſuch reaſons as appear to me concluſive, that the laws in queſtion are intitled to the national ſupport which is given them, both on grounds of political right and religious duty.

In the firſt place, the nation at large approves thoſe laws, and believes the doctrines which they protect to be eſſential to Chriſtianity. It judges thoſe laws alſo to be neceſſary to the very exiſtence of that eſtabliſhment which ſupports the national religion, and are therefore neceſſary to what the nation has wiſely made an eſſential part of the conſtitution. As a reaſon for their repeal, the laws are charged with perſecution; yet they reſtrain no man's private ſentiments; they pretend to no controul over

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the mind; they preſcribe no other limit to public profeſſions, but ſuch as is equally calculated to promote peace and charity among all parties, ſuch as was due to the national religion, and to the honour of God and his revelation, by diſcountenancing the rancour of uncharitable aſperities; by forbidding the indecency of ſcandalous invectives againſt the national church, and the outrages of infidelity and blaſphemy.

If it ſhould be ſaid, that the laws have been inadequate to their object, becauſe they have not prevented the forbidden invectives and blaſphemy, the objection is too comprehenſive to be of any force; for it applies equally to all laws, and aſſerts no more than that the beſt laws are not ſufficient for the total ſuppreſſion of crimes and miſdemeanours. If it ſhould be urged, that theſe laws are inſufficient, becauſe they are ſometimes violated with impunity; becauſe

cauſe ſome individuals are found hardy enough to dare their rigour, and the cenſure of public opinion; it proves the lenity of the magiſtrate, and defeats the charge of perſecution.

As the inefficiency of civil proviſions, for the honour and preſervation of religion, does not appear from the mere exiſtence of public offences againſt them; their efficacy on the contrary is evinced by the general adherence to them; their juſtice and utility, by the hiſtory of all mankind, as well as the particular experience of this country.

Religion, in all ages and countries, has been protected by law, becauſe the laws are inſufficient to ſecure the peace and happineſs of ſociety without religion. Some of the moſt intereſting duties of ſociety reſt on obligations independent of all civil authority; and even the motives to civil obedience de-

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rive their force, in conſcientious and enlightened minds, more from theſe primary ſanctions, and the concurrence of public opinion, than from the terror of civil puniſhment. The laws therefore, in protecting religion, add to their own authority and efficacy; while they repay, in part, the ſervice which they owe.

The value of uſeful inſtitutions, reſtraints, and habits, is often imperfectly known till they are loſt. While they exiſt, their ſilent operation, their certain but imperceptible influence, are conſidered as inefficacy. To inattentive obſervers the removal of the taliſman alone can demonſtrate its virtue. It requires no great knowledge of mankind to know, that the conduct of individuals, and ſo of the great aggregate of ſociety, is influenced (even in important points, where only the individual is ultimately concerned) by public opinion and general concurrence.

While laws, which regard ſuch intereſts, exiſt, men act habitually, and, as it were, inſenſibly, under the influence of their authority. But remove the laws, and the charm is diſſolved. The individual recovers his natural right of ruining thoſe ultimate and beſt intereſts, which his civil duty had taught him to conſult. It is thus that reſtraints on the exerciſe of ſelfiſh conduct, and the profeſſion of private ſentiments, are among thoſe wholeſome means of culture, which reſtrain the pernicious exuberancies of nature, and diſtinguiſh the citizen from the ſavage. This is more remarkably true with reſpect to religion (whoſe ultimate obligations and intereſts are ſo remote) than in any other caſe. You have only to recollect the hiſtory of the laſt century for full proofs of the innumerable extravagancies and impieties of that intellectual licentiouſneſs, which originates in the unreſtrained latitude of profeſſing and propagating

propagating private opinions on the ſubject of religion; and for the ampleſt atteſtation to the wiſdom of ſecuring the ſtability of religion by the proviſions of civil authority.

III. Laws, which have in their principle the ſanction of all ages, and the experience of our own country, ought to be faithfully ſeconded and ſupported by thoſe whoſe buſineſs it is to teach the doctrines which the laws protect. What the Chriſtian magiſtrate has guarded by the law's external ſanction, it is the Chriſtian miniſter's duty to expound, to illuſtrate, to defend, with all the talents which GOD has beſtowed on him, for the good of his flock.

The doctrines which you are thus bound, by your duty to GOD, to the laws of your country, and the engagements of your profeſſion, to inculcate and maintain, have been of late years

too much neglected; as if doctrines of faith were ſubordinate parts of Chriſtianity. Yet, all that diſtinguiſhes Chriſtianity from other religions is doctrinal: a Chriſtian's hopes and conſolations, his obligations and motives, are doctrinal points; the very means and end of his ſalvation, the main objects of his moſt earneſt contention, are all points of faith and doctrine. Diveſt then Chriſtianity of its faith and doctrines, and you deſpoil it of all that is peculiar to it in its motives, its conſolations, its ſanctions, and its duties. You diveſt it of all that made revelation neceſſary: you reduce it to the cold and inefficient ſubſtance of what is called philoſophy; that philoſophy which has of late years ſhewn itſelf not the friend of religion, learning, and civil order, but of anarchy, conceit, and atheiſm: you reduce it to the obſcure glimmering of human knowledge; that knowledge which the firſt and greateſt of the ancient

ancient philoſophers confeſſed to be totally inſufficient to ſatisfy the doubts and ſolicitude of an enquiring mind; and looked forward with a kind of prophetic exultation to the period when Divine Providence, in compaſſion to the weakneſs of our nature, ſhould enlighten mankind by that revelation of himſelf which modern philoſophers reject.

IV. As doctrines of faith are ſo important a part of a Chriſtian Miniſter's duty, it concerns him to guard himſelf againſt the cauſes which have operated to their neglect. One cauſe has been, the ſuppoſed unfitneſs of ſuch ſubjects for general inſtruction, eſpecially of the poor and uneducated. We cannot have a better rule for the examination of this queſtion, than St. Paul's paſtoral directions for the conduct of the Miniſtry. And, for this purpoſe, there is a circumſtance of great conſequence in thoſe

thoſe directions which merits your attention; and that is, that the Apoſtle makes no diſtinction between learned and unlearned Chriſtians. He does not preſcribe different ſubjects for different orders of Chriſtians, but he conſiders all, in themſelves, as liable to condemnation; all therefore requiring the ſame atonement, all to be juſtified by the ſame ſacrifice, and conſequently, all intereſted in the ſame doctrines.

Children, and uneducated perſons, are, I ſuſpect, dealt unfairly by, when they are ſuppoſed incapable of underſtanding the doctrines of faith. I doubt not but both one and the other underſtand more than we give them credit for, and much more than they can explain. They underſtand the doctrines as far as they are taught, or they can be underſtood by human comprehenſion: that is, as ſimple propoſitions of GOD's word, unembarraſſed by the difficulties

culties of ſpeculation, and the oppoſitions of ſcience falſely ſo called. But, whatever *our* doubts of their capacity may be, the injunction is clear and poſitive, that to them the goſpel ſhould be preached. But what is this goſpel? What thoſe good-tidings which the poor are to have preached to them? Not mere precepts of morality. The moral law holds out the ſtrict alternatives of good and evil, of reward and puniſhment. But human nature is incapable of perfect duty; and the moral law ſupplies no means of remedying the defects of our nature, and of ſatisfying the demands of divine juſtice. The good-tidings are the hopes and conſolations which are offered by the new covenant, and reſt on the ſatisfaction made for us, not by ourſelves, but by our Redeemer. To preach the goſpel, therefore, is to preach the doctrines of ſatisfaction by the death of Chriſt; that is, the doctrines of atonement and redemption:

and

and to preach them to the poor, is to preach them to the congregations from which they have been often ſtudiouſly excluded.

Another cauſe of the neglect of thoſe doctrines has been the improper uſe made of them by enthuſiaſts. This indeed, though a very powerful, and, perhaps, a natural cauſe, does not deſerve the name of a reaſon. It is that ſpecies of prejudice, againſt the uſe of any thing on account of its abuſe, which frequently divides men, upon all ſubjects, into oppoſite parties. Enthuſiaſts had perverted the doctrines of ſcripture; they had made belief in their Saviour, and reliance on his atonement, alone neceſſary to ſalvation; they had profeſſed principles which were calculated to diſſolve the bonds of ſociety, and releaſe men from all their ſocial and civil duties. The doctrines, therefore, which were ſuppoſed to be productive

of

of ſuch effects, were diſcredited, in order to reſtore the duties of morality to their proper efficacy. The conſequence was, what might have been expected, morality and faith were almoſt as much ſeparated as if they were incompatible and excluſive of each other. The Rationaliſt adopted an oppoſite doctrine to the Enthuſiaſt; and moral works were held out as alone neceſſary to ſalvation. The concluſion was founded on a common fallacy, that where one extreme is wrong, the oppoſite muſt be right. Yet this is, in truth, an error, at leaſt as unſcriptural, and of as great magnitude as the other.

The ſcriptures declare faith and moral works to be each of them neceſſary to ſalvation: to inculcate therefore the ſufficiency of faith without moral works, or of moral works without faith, are pernicious hereſies, which a good Chriſtian miniſter will exert his beſt powers

to counteract. It ſhould be his buſineſs ſo to combine them in his paſtoral inſtructions, as to render the two duties ſources of improvement to each other. He ſhould animate the deſponding Chriſtian, who confronts the ſeverity of the law with his own imperfections, by thoſe encouraging motives to repentance and amendment, and thoſe ſure hopes of ſalvation, which are preſented to him in the covenant of grace: he ſhould endeavour to infuſe a life, and energy, and ſincerity, into the faith of others, by inculcating thoſe active and indiſpenſible duties demanded by the covenant of works.

V. The two branches of the Chriſtian law, included in the duties of faith and works, being, as was obſerved, of univerſal importance, cannot either of them be excluded by a miniſter of the church of England from parochial inſtruction, without manifeſt injury to his people.

But

But though ſubjects of univerſal importance ſhould be univerſally taught, yet the mode of inſtruction may vary with local and other circumſtances.

For the ſake of giving a definite form to what I have to propoſe on the ſubject of religious inſtruction, I ſhall confine myſelf, for the preſent, to the conſideration of ſuch pariſhes whoſe inhabitants have not had the ſuperior advantages of education.

The mode of inſtruction, which lies moſt open to a miniſter's choice and diſcernment, is that of ſermons. In this there are three principal objects for his attention, the *ſubject*, the *language*, and the *form* of inſtruction. Of the two great branches of the Chriſtian law, from which the ſubject may be drawn, I have endeavoured to ſhew, that in the firſt there is little room for ſelection, becauſe the ſeveral duties of

faith and hope are in all places equally neceſſary and ſeaſonable. The duties of morality in the ſecond branch of the ſame law afford greater variety. Local circumſtances will frequently render particular ſubjects of admonition, or recommendation, more ſuited to one place than another; and the ſame leſſons, which are founded on events and cuſtoms that paſs under the miniſter's own eye, will give a life and efficacy to his inſtructions very different from general and unappropriate reflections. This is one of the circumſtances which renders a miniſter's reſidence in his pariſh of ſo much conſequence to his pariſhioners, becauſe ſo conducive to their ſpiritual improvement.

All controverted points have ſometimes been conſidered as improper ſubjects for parochial inſtruction. But I have before ſhewn that the illuſtration of controverted ſubjects forms an indiſpenſible

penſible part of a miniſter's duty to his people, and to his profeſſion: for the controverted points include the great and diſtinguiſhing articles of our faith, which St. Paul has enjoined you to hold faſt, and to teach, and, where occaſion requires, earneſtly to contend for. But though controverted ſubjects cannot be declined by a miniſter without the deſertion of his duty, the controverſial diſcuſſion of them, in a ſermon, may and ought. A detail of the perverſe diſputings and objections of the enemies of our faith, would not edify, but confound, an unlearned congregation; and the difficulties would, perhaps, leave an impreſſion on their minds not conducive to their faith, their hope, or their charity.

2. As to the language of parochial diſcourſes, perſpicuity is indiſputably their firſt requiſite. And as to the attainment of this indiſpenſible quality, nothing

nothing more is wanting than ſimplicity in the terms, and conciſeneſs in the periods. Indeed the obſcurity of oral inſtruction ariſes much more from length of periods, and want of method, than from the uſe of unfamiliar terms, if they are correct. But I forbear entering on a ſubject which has been ſo often and ſo copiouſly handled. I will only add, that the beſt choſen ſubjects, and the juſteſt language, require for their proper effect the aid of an earneſt and affectionate manner of delivery, which is the natural reſult of a warm ſenſe of duty, and of habitual intercourſe with your people.

3. On the *form* of inſtruction, which I mentioned as the third object of the preacher's attention, I am the more ſolicitous of propoſing my ſentiments, becauſe it appears to be ſuſceptible of very advantageous improvements; and has been, I think, leſs attended to in expreſs

expreſs treatiſes on the eloquence of the pulpit. As all diſcourſes from the pulpit are profeſſedly comments on the ſcriptures, they ought to be made as conducive as poſſible to the illuſtration of the ſcriptures. Without this neceſſary connection between the text and the comment, the diſcourſe, however judiciouſly choſen and well compoſed, will appear to be ſubſervient to the comment, inſtead of the comment's being ſo to the text. The inconvenience which belongs, more or leſs, to all continued diſcourſes on one text, would be avoided by detailing and expounding in ſermons ſucceſſive portions of ſcripture in the form of paraphraſe and illuſtration. There would be many advantages in this mode of communicating inſtruction to the congregation.

1*ſt*. It would enable the miniſter to give them a regular and complete interpretation of the word of God. Such a con-

a connected expoſition of ſcripture would exhibit a comprehenſive view of GOD's diſpenſations, and the moſt awful evidences of his providence; the livelieſt lineaments of virtue and vice, and the moſt impreſſive evidences of the divine origin of our religion, and the authenticity of the ſcriptures.

2*dly*. To thoſe whoſe neceſſities deſerve to be regarded, who are too poor to buy written comments on the ſcriptures, or too occupied to ſtudy them, this form of inſtruction would be highly beneficial.

3*dly*. Another advantage would be, the union of the doctrines of morality and faith. When theſe ſubjects are detached from each other, as they too frequently are, and often muſt be in continued diſcourſes on one text, the mind of an inattentive or unpractiſed hearer is too apt to be deceived into an opinion

opinion that they are independent and excluſive of each other. The form of expoſition which I recommend, would in a great degree prevent the pernicious conſequences which have expoſed unlearned and inexperienced perſons to the partial and artful miſrepreſentations of Socinians and Freethinkers, as well as the errors of enthuſiaſts.

4*thly*. May I add, as another reaſon, that the variety would intereſt the attention of the hearers. To excite an intereſt on any ſubject is the moſt difficult, as well as the moſt powerful means of inſtruction. To excite it by the very variety which ſcripture itſelf preſents, would be to conſult the pleaſure of the hearer without the ſacrifice of method; it would be capable of perfect ſucceſs, for it would be to ſecure the moſt deſirable end by the moſt legitimate and appropriate means.

5thly. Nor would this form of inſtruction exclude the higher graces of compoſition. The religious and moral injunctions of the goſpel, interſperſed as they are with the moſt intereſting facts and parables, afford the happieſt opportunities of addreſſing, in their turn, the reaſon, the imagination, and the affections; and of exemplifying in the fulleſt manner the directions of St. Paul, "to be inſtant in ſeaſon, out of ſeaſon; "to reprove, rebuke, exhort."

Next to the illuſtration of the ſcriptures, eſpecially of the New Teſtament, I would recommend, as ſubjects from the pulpit, the ſeveral parts of the Liturgy. The order, the connection, the import of its offices, would ſupply ample materials for uſeful admonition; and the illuſtration of their beauty and propriety would, to the warmth of devotion, add a rectitude of feeling, and enable

enable the hearers to pray both with the heart and the underſtanding.

VI. From what I have obſerved in different parts of this addreſs, on ſome of the duties of a pariſh miniſter, it is eaſy to collect, that his office is of no trivial conſequence to ſociety. Indeed, there cannot be imagined a more important function. His ſituation is diſtinguiſhed by the moſt intereſting duties, which may render him by turns the teacher, the adviſer, the friend, the guardian of his people. The faithful diſcharge of his duties will inſure reſpect; and the reſidence, the habitual intercourſe, which that fidelity implies, will add affection to his character.

A reſponſibility for the intellectual improvement, the ſpiritual welfare, the eternal intereſt, of his people, is a very awful conſideration. To direct the unformed and ingenuous perceptions of

the young; to reanimate the dormant ſenſibilities of the old; and to preſent to all ages and conditions ſuch a picture of truth as may warn them againſt the deceitfulneſs of this world, and prepare them effectually for another; are objects ſufficient to employ the ableſt talents, and to intereſt the beſt feelings of our nature. An office, which poſſeſſes ſo many means of public ſervice, I need not add, requires for the due diſcharge of it proportionate qualifications.

As I have nothing ſo much at heart as the good of my clergy, which ought ever to be inſeparable from the good of their people, I ſhall confine the remainder of this addreſs to a view of ſuch clerical qualifications as are neceſſary to the profeſſional duty and credit of the one, and the ſpiritual improvement and intereſt of the other. Such a view will be uſeful to future candidates for orders in this dioceſe; and will enable

able them to form a juſter conception of the high office to which they aſpire, than perhaps their ordinary ſtudies would lead them to.

The previous requiſites for the due diſcharge of any office are, a quick ſenſe of duty, an exact knowledge of profeſſional duties, and true ideas of the neceſſary qualifications.

A knowledge of requiſite duties would be very inſufficient without the neceſſary qualifications; and to both of them ſhould be added a quick ſenſe of duty, and feeling for profeſſional character. The clerical duties are diſtinctly marked in that admirable ſummary which is contained in the ordination ſervice: a ſervice which I cannot too ſtrongly recommend to the frequent peruſal and ſerious reflection of every candidate for the miniſtry.

For

For the diſcharge of theſe duties the neceſſary qualifications are both moral and literary. Piety, integrity of character, and purity of manners, are requiſite for one claſs of duties: a knowledge of the evidences of Chriſtianity, the truth of its diſtinguiſhing doctrines, and of the authenticity of its records; and a competent acquaintance with the learned languages, eſpecially with that in which Chriſtianity was firſt delivered to the world, is neceſſary for the other.

For the moral qualifications of candidates I muſt truſt, in a great meaſure, to the repreſentations of my beneficed clergy; and ſhall truſt with confidence, that a regard for the credit of the order will prevent the influence of ill-placed tenderneſs. For the literary qualifications the candidate muſt be his own repreſentant. I ſhall therefore, for his ſake, be more explicit on this part of his qualifications, becauſe I am anxious, not only

only to prevent excuſes for defective preparation, but alſo to convince him, that what I expect from him at his examination is the leaſt that he ought to know; and that want of preparation is owing not ſo much to want of competent abilities, (which is indeed a diſqualification for any office) or to difficulty in the means of preparation, as to want of reflection, and of a juſt conception of the office for which he is a candidate.

I have conſulted the convenience of my candidates by publiſhing for their uſe a detail of what is expected from them in examination; and I hope I have facilitated the means of preparation by ſpecifying all that is then expected. The exerciſes there pointed out are the humbleſt fruits of a regular education. The Latin is intended as a trial of the candidate's grammatical knowledge, and a proof that he is not unprepared, in the

the common elements of literature, for a learned profeſſion. By the Engliſh exerciſe he is expected to ſhew himſelf not unable, from an ignorance of his own language, to perform that part of his parochial duties which is included in preaching and expounding of GOD's word. The reading there ſpecified (from which the principles of his religion, and a knowledge of his profeſſion, are to be derived, and of which he is to give an account in his examination) is no more than the neceſſary qualification of him whoſe buſineſs it is to teach what it is every man's concern to know: it is no more than the qualification which ought to diſtinguiſh the teacher from his people; no more than is ſufficient to enable him to have ready a reaſon for the religion which he profeſſes; and to contend, if occaſions preſent themſelves, earneſtly and effectually for the faith, which every Chriſtian miniſter by his profeſſion undertakes to defend.

A can-

A candidate for orders ſhould conſide a proficiency in profeſſional attainments as a point of honour and virtuous diſtinction; yet not ſo much to excel others, as himſelf; not ſo much for emulation as ſelf-improvement, and a means of qualifying him to do all the good of which his profeſſion is ſuſceptible. Without a competent ſhare of learning, and of ſacred knowledge, acquired by diligent ſtudy of GOD's word, he deprives himſelf of half the means of doing his duty. He ſhould eſteem inſufficiency in profeſſional knowledge as more degrading to a teacher, even in the eyes of the world, than poverty. He ſhould remember, that his order was once the ſole depoſitary of learning; and the recollection ſhould ſtimulate him to add to his reſources rather than diminiſh them; and to keep pace with the intellectual improvement of the world, by an accumulation of profeſſional attainments. He ſhould eſteem all at-

tainments, however brilliant, however otherwiſe uſeful, which are not ſtrictly profeſſional, as ſecondary and ſubſervient accompliſhments. He ſhould conſider them with a conſcientious circumſpection, and watch the motions of his own mind, leſt in the fondneſs of his heart, and the partiality of ſelf-ſatisfaction, he ſhould ſuffer thoſe ſecondary objects to depreſs in his eſtimation the value of his profeſſional and primary concerns.

As a general rule to try the application of his ſtudies to his future deſtination, he ſhould reflect what his profeſſion is, and how it may be beſt employed. He ſhould look upon the profeſſion, for which he is preparing himſelf, as the profeſſion of doing good, of religious and moral good. He will then eſteem that ſituation in which he can do moſt good preferable to all others: and he will be ſure, that, if he is duly qualified for his profeſſion, he will do moſt good within

within the ſphere of his own duties. He ſhould know, that he will be bound by duty and by conſcience, in all his purſuits, to conſult not only the credit of himſelf, but the reſpectability of his order; and that his people will have great and ſerious claims on him as their teacher and example. With this impreſſion on his mind, he will think the diligent employment of his time in profeſſional ſtudies a very convenient as well as creditable means of detaching him from unclerical and unbecoming engagements; and that the extent of thoſe means will depend much on his previous habits, his ſtudies, and his acquirements.

After ſuch conſiderations and inducements, can it be neceſſary to add, that, when he thinks of preparation for orders, he ſhould compare with his expected qualifications the length of time employed in his education; and eſpecially

the time ſubſequent to the uſual term of ſchool education, whether employed in academical or domeſtic ſtudies.

Upon the whole it may be concluded, that a candidate for orders, who has a juſt conception of the clerical office, and a proper feeling for profeſſional credit, will not ſuffer himſelf to be unqualified for an office, for which a long courſe of education ſhould have prepared him; he will not conſider any ſecondary acquirements as a compenſation for profeſſional deficiency; and will think any diſpenſation from requiſite qualifications as not leſs diſcreditable to himſelf than to his order: he will eſteem ſecular employments as improper paſſports to a religious office; and will not allow himſelf to be inſtrumental to a reproach, that his order ſhould ever be a refuge for diſappointment, extravagance, or adventure.

The

The topics, Reverend Brethren, to which I have called your attention, and which have carried this addreſs to a length which I hope you will think their importance demanded, are of ſo general and important a concern, that I have taken this, the earlieſt, opportunity of ſubmitting to you my ſentiments; and they are ſuch as I hope will convince you of the intereſt I feel in your profeſſional character, and the ſucceſs of your parochial duties. You perceive that I have purpoſely declined all ſuch local ſubjects as require longer experience on my part, and demand the aſſiſtance of that information, which it was the object of my circular papers, aided by the communications of this day, to collect.

I have no doubt that I ſhall, on all occaſions, obtain from you the information which it concerns me to poſſeſs; and I wiſh you to be perſuaded that I ſhall

ſhall be ſtudious to employ it in ſuch a manner as may beſt enable me to diſcharge my duty, and to promote your credit and welfare.

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